



The Magic of the Horse-shoe Robert Lawrence

The study of the origin and history of popular customs and beliefs affords an insight, otherwise unattainable, into the operations of the human mind in early times. Superstitions, however trivial in themselves, relics of paganism though they be, and oftentimes comparable to baneful weeds, are now considered proper subjects for scientific research. While the ignorant savage is a slave to many superstitious fancies which dominate his every action, the educated man strives to be free from such a bondage, yet recognizes as profitable the study of those same beliefs. The heterogeneous character of the material drawn from so many sources has rendered it difficult, if not impossible, to follow any distinctly systematic treatment of the subject. However, the development in recent years of a widespread interest in all branches of folk-lore warrants the hope that any volume devoted to this subject, and representing somewhat diligent research, may have a certain value, in spite of its imperfections. The expert folklorist may find much to criticize; but this book, treating of popular beliefs, is intended for popular reading. It has been the writer's aim to make the chapter on the Horse-Shoe as exhaustive as possible, as this attractive symbol of superstition does not appear to have received hitherto the attention which it merits. - Summary by Robert Means Lawrence

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